Legacy

Sam Moyo: A Life of Prodigious Scholarship, Institution Building and Strategic Activism

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ABSTRACT

The car accident that took Sam Moyo’s life in Delhi on 22 November 2015 and injured his comrades Paris Yeros and Marcelo Rosa, cut short a scholar at the height of his powers. Working together with a group of like-minded colleagues, Sam had finally built the foundations of a vibrant tri-continental network that could hold his dreams: the Agrarian South Network. He was in Delhi at a conference on ‘Labour Questions in the Global South’, hosted by Praveen Jha, professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University, one of his two closest intellectual partners — the other, of course, being Yeros. The conference, like earlier gatherings in Sao Paulo and Brasilia, was an opportunity to coordinate meetings of the Network and its journal, *Agrarian South: Journal of Political Economy*. As it turned out, a meeting of the journal’s editorial board was Sam’s last activity before the accident.

While the outpourings of grief at the news of his passing partly reflected the shocking nature of the event, discussions in different media at the time, and more recently, were united by the recognition of Sam’s immense gifts and contributions as a scholar, public intellectual and institution builder. They were also an expression of profound loss and appreciation of his unique ability to bring people together and inspire them to throw themselves into worthwhile projects, such as theorizing land and agrarian questions in Africa, developing methodologies for research on land redistribution in his beloved Zimbabwe, or consolidating a research and learning organization that he was building or developing. Throughout an intellectual career that

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spanned decades and produced a massive body of work, Sam consistently championed the rights of Africa’s smallholders as well as its landless and dispossessed communities, and chronicled the struggles of agrarian social movements for equitable land rights. He followed up his research with intensive engagements with policy makers, civil society organizations and research networks, as well as social movements, and was much in demand in Africa and beyond in these capacities.

In this essay, I discuss Sam Moyo’s politics and his knowledge production as two equally important strands in his life. While his achievements in each of these spheres were significant, the combination of the two lent a monumental quality to his work and highlighted the strengths he brought to his endeavours: intellectual clarity and depth, hard work, stubborn determination, a huge appetite for life and friendship, and charisma in large doses. He had a way with people, irrespective of class, race, gender and generational differences, and while certain of his positions were non-negotiable, he was always personable and persuasive in argument, consistently displaying what Praveen Jha has described as his ‘charming inflexibility on matters of principle’.

SAM MOYO’S LIFE AND POLITICS

Sam’s birth and childhood in colonial Zimbabwe, his sojourns in Sierra Leone and Nigeria and his return to Zimbabwe in the 1980s as a researcher in the newly established Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies (ZIDS), were all important influences in his life and achievements. Brought up in the black township of Highfield by a trade unionist father and a mother who was one of the first black women to work in broadcasting in colonial Zimbabwe, he was a Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU) Youth League activist from an early age, enduring a short stint in jail even before he was a teenager (M. Moyo, forthcoming). This history of struggle shaped his view of post-colonial land and labour questions in settler Africa and influenced his career choices, his research interests and his political stances. After high school in Zimbabwe, he gained a scholarship to study at Njala University in Sierra Leone, graduating with a BA in Education and Geography in 1976. He then went to Canada for post-graduate studies, earning an MA in Geography from the University of Western Ontario in 1979. After several years of study while working, he was awarded a PhD in Rural Development and Environmental Management from the University of Northumbria in the UK in 1994 (M. Moyo, forthcoming; see also Amanor-Wilks, 2016).

Whilst in Sierra Leone, he often spent holidays with relatives in Dakar; he later had two stints in Nigeria to conduct thesis research and then to teach at the Universities of Calabar and Port Harcourt. All these experiences left an indelible mark on Sam; they cemented his pan-African sensibility, gave him a strong appreciation of West Africa’s distinct colonial and post-colonial
trajectories, and a love of its cuisine and dress. Most importantly, they brought him into first contact with the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), established in 1973 by a small group of directors of African social science research institutions under the leadership of Samir Amin. CODESRIA drew prominent intellectuals in exile such as Archie Mafeje, Thandika Mkandawire, Mahmood Mamdani and Zenebeworke Tadesse to its nurturing fold. Having become an active participant in CODESRIA from the 1980s, Sam coordinated several of its working groups. As one of only a handful of scholars involved in research on agrarian and land issues in this period, he became very important to CODESRIA’s efforts to build knowledge in this area. He joined already established scholars in the field such as Archie Mafeje, Dessalegn Rahmato and Mahmoud Ben Romdhane, and went on to make important interventions in land debates in Africa. In 1998, he was elected Vice-President of CODESRIA for three years, becoming President of the organization a decade later, between 2008 and 2011. It was during his tenure that CODESRIA established the Afro-Arab Institute to deepen intellectual understanding and challenge the divides between North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, as well as the China–Africa and Africa–India initiatives, which broadened intellectual exchanges within the global South. He brought his leadership gifts to an organization enjoying a period of growth and consolidation after crisis. In CODESRIA, Sam found a home that became increasingly vital for his very survival, particularly in a turbulent period in Zimbabwe in which his positions on the land reforms fractured his intellectual and personal relations with some of his closest collaborators of the past and complicated his relations with the ZANU-PF government.

In spite of his long-standing, consistent critique of government policy shifts on the land question — which, as he pointed out, had from 1990 privileged the creation of a cadre of large and small black capitalist farmers, in keeping with its embrace of neoliberal economic policies, while ignoring the interests of the rural and urban landless and poor peasants in rural areas (Moyo, 1995, 2000) — Sam’s relations with Zimbabwe’s Ministry of Agriculture and the President’s Office were mutually respectful. Anecdotal evidence points to requests for his advice on a range of issues over the years, which he honoured, as well as offers of farmlands and high-level government appointments, which he declined. At the same time, like many who were critical of government policies, he suffered his fair share of intimidation. In May 2008, while he was in Accra at a meeting of a CODESRIA multinational working group, he received news that some unknown persons had broken into his house and trashed his study. This targeted attack on the space of his intellectual production had the hallmarks of an intelligence warning, although this could not be verified.

Sam’s strong relationship with CODESRIA and significant actors within it had been forged early in his academic career. On his return to Zimbabwe after his stint as lecturer in Nigeria in the 1980s, Sam and several other
young researchers such as Brian Raftopoulos, Yemi Katerere and Rudo Gaidzanwa were hired by the embryonic Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies, conceived by the Zimbabwe state under the leadership of Ibbo Mandaza, then permanent secretary in the Ministry of Manpower Planning and Development. It was established with the support of the then executive secretary of CODESRIA, Abdala Bujra, and of Thandika Mkandawire, who was seconded from CODESRIA (Raftopoulos, forthcoming). ZIDS, which was part of the post-colonial emancipatory project in Zimbabwe, was to provide a counterweight to the domination of knowledge production by white scholars and a history of discrimination at the University of Rhodesia against black students pursuing post-graduate training and subjects such as the natural sciences and economics. It was also to respond to demands to decolonize the academy and ensure the substantive participation of black scholars on the faculty and in administration. By all accounts, ZIDS played a critical part in Sam’s formation as a scholar in the traditions of Marxist political economy (Martin, 2017; Raftopoulos, forthcoming).

The connection with CODESRIA put ZIDS at the centre of African intellectual production; it brought its scholars into the orbit of leading African social scientists and gave them access to some of the key persons and debates in CODESRIA in this period. CODESRIA’s early success owed much to the work of individual scholars from important hubs of Africa’s post-colonial knowledge production such as the Universities of Dar es Salaam, Makerere, Ibadan, Ghana, Ahmadu Bello and Cheikh Anta Diop. Several of these individuals also became members of another CODESRIA-supported organization, the African Association of Political Science (AAPS), based in Harare. The young scholars who came to work at ZIDS thus had the benefit of a vibrant network of radical scholars whose formidable intellect and commitment to an emancipatory project in knowledge production has continued to inspire generations of scholars.

Sam worked in ZIDS for over a decade. These were productive years in which he cemented his research interest in the agrarian and land questions of Zimbabwe and Africa, rising to the rank of research professor in the 1990s, when ZIDS was absorbed into the University of Zimbabwe. His work in this period laid the groundwork for his distinctive analysis of land and agrarian issues in Zimbabwe. An important piece of work in this regard is a monograph from 1995 entitled *The Land Question in Zimbabwe*, considered by many to be a seminal contribution, which provides a compass for understanding what came to pass under the fast track land reforms and the farmland invasions (Moyo, 1995). This was also when Sam and his colleague and friend Yemi Katerere established the Zimbabwe Environmental Research Organization (ZERO) devoted to environmental questions, an important research interest that continued to be a red thread in his scholarship. A collection of SADC

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1. The book had been preceded by an article of the same title published in 1986.
2. Southern African Development Community.
country profiles, *The Southern African Environment*, which he edited with Phil O’Keefe and Michael Sill (Moyo et al., 1993) is an example of the work he and colleagues at ZERO were engaged in. In that book, environmental issues were framed within a sustainability approach, taking a community perspective that highlighted the ways in which productive systems affected agrarian livelihoods. This was an explicit departure from the productivity and stewardship perspectives on sustainability, and was in keeping with Sam’s prioritization of the lives of small peasants. The years at ZIDS were also when he established a family life, married Dede Amanor-Wilks and brought up five daughters who became his pride and joy (Amanor-Wilks, 2016).

On leaving ZIDS — whose fortunes began to wane because of flagging state commitment — he joined the Southern Africa Regional Institute for Policy Studies (SARIPS), founded by Ibbo Mandaza as a project of his Southern Africa Political Economy Series Trust. As Director, Sam filled a critical intellectual leadership and mentorship role in which he thrived. Scores of students from the Southern Africa region were awarded postgraduate degrees at SARIPS. Together with other members of the SARIPS faculty such as Patricia McFadden, Sam fashioned a curriculum in critical policy studies which enabled students to engage with African scholarship that was not much read in mainstream universities across Africa. As this period also coincided with the crises in higher education in Africa, SARIPS provided a welcome alternative for students and scholars wanting to escape academic environments that were often in survival mode, churning out students with few opportunities for critical learning. Although SARIPS is now defunct, members of the cadre it contributed to producing thrive in research and policy positions, making important contributions to the search for solutions to Africa’s problems.

In 2002, Sam established the African Institute of Agrarian Studies (AIAS), recently renamed as the Sam Moyo African Institute of Agrarian Studies (SMAIAS) to commemorate his life and work. It was to be his last institutional home. This most ambitious project, a research and policy advocacy organization, consolidated his earlier efforts and signalled his maturation as one of Africa’s foremost intellectuals of agrarian and land issues, something of a ‘fundi’, as a mutual friend once described him to me. In addition to a prodigious amount of scholarship and research output, Sam continued to supervise and advise numerous postgraduate students from universities across the globe, and was in high demand as a keynote speaker at conferences and as consultant to several African governments and regional and sub-regional organizations. He threw his energies into the Agrarian South Network (ASN), which from small beginnings now brings together over 50 members actively involved in agrarian research and teaching, policy

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3. Derived from *umfindisi* (a teacher), from the Nguni family of languages, meaning a master craftsman, expert or genius.
advocacy and social movement work in Africa, Latin America and Asia. The ASN has three core, interconnected projects — *Agrarian South: Journal of Political Economy*, the Agrarian Summer School, and research and publications on contemporary issues of agrarian transformation. Its tangible outputs to date are two books, several volumes of the journal, and seven annual meetings of the International Agrarian Summer School, which is arguably its most vibrant and visible undertaking. The Summer School is a space to engage with heterodox perspectives, to debate and test ideas about the trajectories of agrarian change.

Some of the emblematic debates within the ASN have been generated by Sam’s dense body of work with its rich theoretical and empirical insights; these include whether there is a land question in settler Africa or only a labour question; the salience and applicability of the concept of re-peasantization; and the nature of agrarian social movements in Africa. Such debates are essential to the Network’s mandate to build epistemologies of the global South and to create an epistemic community on land and agrarian change. In the second part of this essay, I reflect on three strands of Sam’s contributions: the land and agrarian questions of Zimbabwe and the rest of Africa; the scramble for land in Africa, Asia and Latin America; and agrarian social movements of the global South.

THREE CONTRIBUTIONS

On Land and Agrarian Change in Zimbabwe and Africa

Sam’s work on Zimbabwe is praised by several scholars for its empirical rigour (Johnson, 2015; Mamdani, 2008; Scoones, 2017). Scoones’s reflections on Sam’s method shed light on his contributions. As Scoones notes, ‘the combination of detailed empirical investigation, and deep knowledge of the technical and practical aspects of agricultural production and farming livelihoods, with big picture political economy analysis, and wider theorisation, is especially important and reflects a tradition in political economy that goes back to Marx’s original discussion of method in Grundrisse’ (Scoones, 2017: 2).

Beyond methodological rigour, Sam showed great courage in his robust engagement with Zimbabwe’s land reforms. Building on his earlier research (e.g. Moyo, 1986, 1995, 2011a, 2011b), he charted a course of independent research which eschewed sensationalism and illuminated the scale and significance of land redistribution represented by the Fast Track Land Reform Programme which saw over 200,000 Zimbabwean households acquiring land for their livelihoods. This was for a long time a very lonely undertaking which incurred the disapproval of the different sides of the debates on Zimbabwe’s land reforms. However, Sam was much respected and admired in the wider community of progressive intellectuals within the global South.
for his consistency and the quality of the evidence he produced to back his positions. Murisa (2017) notes that, without this work, the story of the land reforms would not have been comprehensively understood. This is a view shared by some of those who disagreed with, and continue to critique, Sam’s positions on the Zimbabwe land reforms (Raftopoulos, forthcoming).

A long-term advocate for land reforms, Sam expected such processes to address historical dispossession, fostering accumulation from below to resolve the social reproduction challenges of the small peasantry and the rural and urban poor, and to promote the broader democratization of Zimbabwe. This was his consistent grid for assessing the Zimbabwe land reforms. In this, he also chronicled the agency and autonomy of war veterans and rural social movements. He found, based on empirical studies, that the fast track land reforms had resulted in a massive redistribution of land which had benefitted mostly rural people and changed the structure of the agrarian system in Zimbabwe. Previously dominated by large-scale commercial farmers, the system was now more equitable in creating one of the conditions for broad-based transformation which could address poverty, inequalities and citizenship deficits — although in drawing this conclusion, Sam did not turn a blind eye to instances of patronage, illegalities and corruption (Moyo and Chambati, 2013; Moyo and Yeros, 2005a, 2007a, 2007b, 2009, 2011; Murisa, 2017; Scoones, 2017). This pitted him against scholars who saw the fast track land reforms as simply a regime survival strategy and preferred to focus on the authoritarian nationalism of ZANU-PF and its long-term implications for Zimbabwean politics (Moore, 2003; Raftopoulos, 2003 and forthcoming; Sachikonye, 2003).4

Over long periods when there was little policy interest, Sam and a few other scholars kept Africa’s land and agrarian questions alive. While not comparable to his work on Zimbabwe, his insights from Zimbabwe had a positive influence on his work on Africa’s land and agrarian questions. This was evident in the book Land in the Struggles for Citizenship in Africa that Sam co-edited with myself and Yakham Diop (2016a), and the monograph he produced before CODESRIA launched the Multi-national Working Group that produced that book (Moyo, 2008) — although both publications ranged over issues not always explicitly discussed in the Zimbabwe work. In the introduction to the co-edited volume (Moyo et al., 2016b), much of which he wrote, Sam tackled some of the key debates about agrarian and land issues across Africa. First was the question of whether a land question existed outside settler Africa. The great Archie Mafeje himself had argued that in countries which had not experienced settler colonization and widespread land expropriation, there was no significant land question: instead, there was an unresolved agrarian question (Mafeje, 1999). Based on studies of

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4. Sam’s positions have been sharply criticized on the basis that he did not sufficiently acknowledge the human rights abuses and suffering accompanying the fast track land reforms; see for example Jacobs and Mundy (2009) and a rebuttal by David Johnson (2009).
agriculture outside settler Africa that had identified the common challenges to include the marginalization of the poor (and particularly the marginalization of women from access to land), and the growing problem of landlessness alongside land concentration, we argued that there were agrarian questions of both land and labour in smallholder Africa (Moyo et al., 2016b). With over 65 per cent of Africans still working in agriculture, addressing these problems comprehensively would require land redistribution, strengthening of agrarian productive systems, promotion of industrialization, and addressing the challenges of urbanization. Even in countries where agriculture contributes less than 10 per cent of GDP, such as South Africa, Mauritius and Nigeria, there are critical land and agrarian questions.

The insistence that there were land questions in smallholder Africa is linked with Sam’s earlier work on agrarian change in Zimbabwe, in which he and Yeros had identified re-peasantization and semi-proletarianization as two of the processes of agrarian transformation occurring under neoliberalism (Moyo, 2008; Moyo and Yeros, 2005a). Their analysis also critiqued an influential strand in the agrarian literature which argued that, because of the agrarian crisis under neoliberalism, droves of peasants were leaving the countryside and their agriculture-based livelihoods behind. This was theorized as a process of de-agrarianization (Bryceson et al., 2000). While this drew welcome attention to the deep crises in agrarian livelihoods and the responses of farming populations in parts of Africa, the notion of de-agrarianization was widely contested. Many in the field argued that agrarian livelihood activities had always been diversified and included off-farm and non-agricultural elements combined in different ways depending on the perceived opportunities and risks. Moyo and Yeros (2005a) argued that one response to agrarian crisis has been the expansion of wage work among smallholders who continued to engage in self-employment and self-provisioning as a process of semi-proletarianization which, they argued, was neither new nor linear (see also Mafeje, 2003). In support of this position, other studies have observed that the countryside across Africa is home to labour which is less dependent on earnings from agriculture, but also not easily absorbed within the non-farm economy. Even in countries with advanced agrarian transitions such as South Africa, rural peoples’ strategies for survival straddle rural and urban spaces, combining formal and informal sources of income, agricultural self-provisioning and state-sponsored social protection (Du Toit and Neves, 2014).

Moyo and Yeros (2005a) had also observed the growing number of urban dwellers returning to the countryside to take up agrarian livelihood activities, a process they conceptualized as ‘re-peasantization’. There have been calls for an examination of the wider applicability of this concept. As I have argued elsewhere, this is because it is still unclear how widespread and sustained the process is, under what conditions it occurs, and what it represents in agrarian futures (Tsikata, 2015). In Zimbabwe, the mixed profile of new small and middle peasants, which includes war veterans, retired officers of
the Zimbabwe armed forces, teachers and other professionals as well as ex-farm labourers, points to a complex agrarian structure in which actors are connected and resourced in ways not usual for small peasants. Beyond Zimbabwe, studies of agricultural commercialization have observed cases of return to agrarian livelihood activities by a range of urban-based workers in Ghana, Kenya and Zambia, three countries with very different agrarian histories (Hall et al., 2017). In describing contract farmers in south-western Togo, Gardini (2012) argues that several of these are not poor smallholders, but rural and urban ex-migrants with savings to invest in land and commercial farming. Hecht has termed this development a ‘new rurality’, in which rural households are ‘largely semi-proletarianized, semi-globalized and increasingly semi-urban’ (Hecht, 2014: 878; cited in Fairbairn et al., 2014: 659). There is no question, however, that the work of Sam Moyo and Paris Yeros demonstrates significant differences between the responses of the peasantry and those of the rural and urban landless and poor to the changing conditions in agrarian political economies — responses that need consistent and systematic mapping and analysis.

Explaining the Third Scramble for Land in Africa

A few years ago, civil society groups from the developing world expressed alarm about land grabbing. This was occasioned by a spate of large-scale land acquisitions by transnational corporations and governments from Europe, the Americas, Asia and the Middle East as a response to the global financial, food and energy crises from around 2007. It resulted in a frenzy of intellectual activity. One strand mapped the land grabs around the world and provided a tool for collecting and updating the data about acquisitions (Anseeuw et al., 2013). A second strand comprised studies that identified what were called drivers of land grabbing — the list of drivers increasing, with some in dispute, as time went by (Borras and Franco, 2010; Cotula et al., 2009; Kachika, 2010). For example, the idea that land grabs only happened to countries with weak land regulatory mechanisms was challenged with evidence from Latin America, where Brazil was in the paradoxical position of being both a participant in and at the receiving end of large-scale land acquisitions (Borras et al., 2012). Soon, there was a proliferation of case studies of large-scale commercial land acquisitions, examining their implications for local livelihood activities and posing questions about promised and delivered benefits, land tenure and common property resources, employment and responses to dispossession. Some highlighted class and gender differences in effects and responses (Doss et al., 2014; Hall et al., 2015). While the land grabbing literature frenzy has subsided and some of its participants have moved on in response to a call for a second stage of studies focusing more broadly on processes of agrarian change, particularly patterns of land and agricultural commercialization (Edelman, 2013; Oya, 2013), its influence
on the research landscape will remain for a long time. To learn its lessons, it is useful to examine what Sam Moyo, Paris Yeros and Praveen Jha wrote about it.

In their 2012 article entitled ‘Imperialism and Primitive Accumulation: Notes on the New Scramble for Africa’, Sam and his collaborators took a historical approach that characterized what was going on as a third scramble for land in Africa, to be distinguished from colonial acquisitions, especially in settler Africa, and significant land disposessions of the structural adjustment years for mining and other extractive industries, commercial agriculture, tourism and infrastructure. Their most important argument was to draw a connection between primitive accumulation and imperialism, while highlighting the changing character of capital’s march from mercantilism to monopoly capitalism which had moved from an industrial stage to one of financialization (Moyo et al., 2012). Fairbairn’s (2014) analysis of the implications of financialization of capital for land markets is a fascinating account of this stage of monopoly capital identified by Sam and his colleagues as being at the heart of the third scramble for land. Their discussion clearly showed the limitations of the early debates about land grabbing and demonstrated the importance of research that illuminates the challenges of Africa’s failed agrarian transitions and links the current situation to questions about Africa’s agrarian past and futures.

Valorizing Agrarian Social Movements

One of the highlights of a one-day colloquium to commemorate Sam Moyo’s life and work during the Agrarian Summer School of January 2016 was a panel to mark a decade since the publication of the book Reclaiming the Land: The Resurgence of Rural Movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America (Moyo and Yeros, 2005b). Introducing the book’s fourteen chapters, which chronicled the struggles of rural social movements across three continents, its editors challenged the dominant wisdom about the disappearance of the peasantry, drawing attention to the fact that the most progressive and militant social movements in the world were based in the countryside. On the other hand, they pointed out that this was a position that required qualification and critical engagement with rural movements, noting the wide range of such social movements, from the more organized and recognized in parts of Latin America to embryonic, diffuse and spontaneous land occupation movements in Ghana, Malawi and India. As they noted, rural movements can be distinguished by ideology, strategy and tactics, even as they have a shared social basis in the semi-proletarianized peasantry, landless proletarians and urban unemployed (Moyo and Yeros, 2005c).

This introductory chapter situated rural social movements in a wide-ranging discussion of the contexts in which they have been shaped over the years in the periphery by the industrial revolution in Europe, two world
wars, the anti-colonial struggles and the current conjuncture of financialization of capital. All these processes have resulted in the globalization of the agro-food system and a crisis of dependency and under-development in the periphery. This approach enabled Moyo and Yeros to link rural social movements with the unresolved land and agrarian questions as well as the national question in ex-colonies in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and to shift the debate away from the crises of reproduction facing the peasantry to their struggles. As they pointed out, the activities of rural social movements are often misunderstood or underestimated because of analyses that do not take their conditions of existence and reproduction into account. While some of these issues have also been raised by Sam in his CODESRIA monograph (Moyo, 2008), the comparative approach to social movements in *Reclaiming the Land* was particularly useful. The book is a testament to the importance of the tri-continental knowledge project of Sam and his colleagues. At the same time, the schematic nature of the discussion suggests that there is much work to be done on theorizing the diversity of social movements. Sam’s observation about the shallowness of scholarship on rural social movements almost a decade ago (Moyo, 2008) remains valid. In the Agrarian South Network, there are ongoing efforts to continue this work.

**THE FUTURE OF SAM MOYO’S PROJECT**

The small group which coordinates the ASN and serves as editorial collective to the journal is united by its determination to take this project forward and ensure its growth and vitality. Under the leadership of Issa Shivji, one of Sam’s old comrades from CODESRIA who has been acting as honorary executive director of SMAIAS, Joshua Nyoni, chair of the SMAIAS Trust Board, and Walter Chambati, Deputy Executive Director of SMAIAS, who worked very closely with Sam for many years and was involved in many of the surveys carried out by the Institute, the Agrarian Summer School of January 2016 was one of the best attended, most productive and intense. A long-standing gap in the work of the ASN — gender relations and agrarian change — took centre stage. At the school, Sam’s absence was palpable and felt in both the intellectual and the social programmes. It was sad that after many starts and stops, one of the issues to which he was committed as necessary for a full appreciation of agrarian change was being discussed in a number of sessions without his input. The debates that broke out about urban land questions in settler colonies and the gender of agrarian change showed very clearly that the spirit of vigorous debate and contestation would remain a key part of the Network. The social segment of the programme was rescued by the generosity of Beatrice Mtetwa, human rights lawyer and Sam’s life partner of his last decade, who invited the entire school to dinner at her home and provided a live band. The various plans that were made — for books, conferences, more issues of the journal — are all on course. A vibrant and
productive Network would be a most fitting way to honour Sam Moyo’s life and work and secure his legacy as a gifted and tenacious intellectual and champion of the rights of the small peasantry and the rural and urban poor of the global South.

REFERENCES


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